

Message Text

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ACTION DLOS-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 FEA-01 OIC-02 SSO-00

NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00 ACDA-07 AGRE-00 AID-05

CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

DOTE-00 EB-08 EPA-01 ERDA-05 FMC-01 TRSE-00 H-01

INR-07 INT-05 IO-13 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

NSF-01 OES-06 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 /129 W

-----191225Z 006767 /14

O R 191125Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE IMMEDIATE 8039

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY OSLO

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 2876

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PLOS

SUBJECT: LAW OF THE SEA CONSULTATIONS: AMBASSADOR ELLIOT RICHARDSON

REF: (A) STATE 86862 (B) JIDDA 1000 (C) 76 JIDDA 8205

1. EMBASSY WELCOMES VISIT OF AMBASSADOR RICHARDSON AND PARTY TO SAUDI ARABIA. THE AMBASSADOR INVITES AMBASSADOR RICHARDSON AND ONE MEMBER OF HIS PARTY TO BE HIS GUESTS AT THE RESIDENCE. THE AMBASSADOR WOULD ALSO BE PLEASED TO HOST A SMALL RECEPTION THE EVENING OF SATURDAY APRIL 30. AS THE AMBASSADOR WILL BE INVOLVED IN PREPARATIONS FOR HIS DEPARTURE, SUBSTANCE OF THE VISIT WILL BE HANDLED BY DCM HORAN AND THE LOS OFFICER (POLCHIEF MURPHY WHO HAS BEEN DESIGNATED CONTROL OFFICER FOR THE VISIT.)

2. WE ARE URGENTLY TRYING TO GET SAG REACTION TO AND APPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED VISIT. WE DO NOT KNOW HOW THE SAUDIS WILL RESPOND.
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WHILE THEY HAD PREVIOUSLY INFORMED US THAT THEY WOULD WELCOME A VISIT BY LOS EXPERTS IN LATE MARCH OR EARLY APRIL (JIDDA 1000) SUCH A HIGH LEVEL VISIT BY SUCH A LARGE DELEGATION AS THAT PROPOSED MAY OVERWHELM THEM AT THIS TIME WHEN THEY WILL BE INVOLVED WITH OTHER HIGH LEVEL VISITS (E.G. OF VENEZUALAN PRESIDENT) WHICH HAD BEEN SCHEDULED SOME MONTHS IN ADVANCE. MOREOVER, THE EXPECTED RETURN OF

THE KING WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS WILL PROBABLY TURN THE SAUDI GOVERNMENT ON ITS HEAD FOR A WEEK OR MORE. UNDER THE BEST OF CIRCUMSTANCES WE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO SAY WITH ANY DEGREE OF CERTAINTY THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTER WILL BE AVAILABLE IN JIDDA DURING THE VISIT.

3. IF THE VISIT IS APPROVED, THE US SIDE SHOULD NOT EXPECT ANY DEGREE OF SYMMETRY ON THE SAUDI SIDE. SAUDI EXPERTISE IN LOS MATTERS IS VERY THIN. SAUDI LOS DELEGATIONS TEND TO BE FAIR SIZED SINCE EVERY MINISTRY WITH AN INTEREST WANTS TO SEND ITS OWN MAN. THESE NORMALLY INCLUDE INTERIOR, DEFENSE, PETROLEUM, TRANSPORTATION, AGRICULTURE AND HEALTH. WITHIN THOSE MINISTRIES, HOWEVER, THERE ARE NOT NORMALLY PERSONS WITH BROAD AND CONTINUING KNOWLEDGE OF LOS MATTERS. AN LOS POLICY COMMITTEE MEETS IN RIYADH BEFORE MAJOR CONFERENCES UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY LOS EXPERT. REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER MINISTRIES DO NOT NORMALLY COME TO JIDDA, THOUGH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY MIGHT ASK SOME TO COME FOR THIS OCCASION. WE ANTICIPATE THAT THE MAIN CONTACTS OF THE US PARTY WOULD BE THE FOREIGN MINISTER (IF HE IS AVAILABLE) THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS ABDARRAHMAN AL MANSOURI AND THE CHIEF FORMIN LOS EXPERT MOHAMMED OMAR MADANI. THE NUMBER OF PERSONS ON THE US SIDE PRESENT AT THE MEETINGS SHOULD PREFERABLY BE LIMITED TO NOT MUCH GREATER THAN THE NUMBER THE SAUDIS WILL HAVE AVAILABLE FOR DISCUSSIONS.

4. AS TO WHAT MIGHT REASONABLY BE EXPECTED FROM CONSULTATIONS WITH THE SAG, WE BELIEVE THE VIEWS EXPRESSED
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IN JIDDA 8205 OF 22 DECEMBER 1976 ARE STILL VALID, INCLUDING THE COMMENT THAT "DESPITE SAUDI ARABIA'S REGIONAL POWER AND INFLUENCE WE DO NOT THINK IT WILL BE EASY TO PERSUADE THE SAG TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN LOBBYING WITH OTHER STATES." IN FACT AT THIS TIME AS THE SAG ATTEMPTS TO UNIFY THE ARABS FOR A MIDDLE EAST PEACE SOLUTION AND WHILE IT IS AT ODDS WITH MOST OF ITS OPEC PARTNERS WE THINK THE SAG WOULD BE EVEN MORE THAN USUALLY INCLINED TO AVOID CONTROVERSY OVER LOS MATTERS.

5. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, AMBASSADOR RICHARDSON MAY WISH TO CONSIDER DETACHING ONE OR TWO EXPERTS FROM HIS GROUP TO COVER THE SAUDI PORTION OF THE CONSULTATIONS. WE WILL PRESS THE SAG FOR A RESPONSE TO OUR REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF THE VISIT BY AMBASSADOR RICHARDSON AND INFORM THE DEPARTMENT IMMEDIATELY WHEN WE HAVE AN ANSWER. IF THE SAUDIS SHOULD INDICATE THAT THE VISIT WOULD BE INCONVENIENT AT THE PROPOSED TIME, WE THINK WE COULD STILL ARRANGE USEFUL MEETINGS FOR ONE OR TWO

EXPERTS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LAW OF THE SEA, AMBASSADORS, VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 19-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977JIDDA02876
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770135-0906
Format: TEL
From: JIDDA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770443/aaaablkf.tel
Line Count: 118
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: f1efb4a2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION DLOS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 STATE 86862, 77 JIDDA 1000, 76 JIDDA 8205
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2766922
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LAW OF THE SEA CONSULTATIONS: AMBASSADOR ELLIOT RICHARDSON
TAGS: PLOS, SA, (RICHARDSON, ELLIOT L)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f1efb4a2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009